of the Beyond, and condemned to nothingness after death like non-initiated babies. We have described the tender companionship which presides in the relationships between the sexes, and the general harmony which reigns within the groups. But when these are altered, it is to give way to the most extreme solutions, poisoning and murder. It is quite reasonable for the informants to underline spontaneously the role of forgetfulness in funeral rites. (2)

3, P. 112.

For there is a striking contrast between the joyous irony with which one answers someone who is ignorant enough to inquire about a relative deceased for quite awhile: "Hehe, Hehe" (a1), "to the sand! in the sand!," and the horrible apparition of the atëtu which is evoked with ritual sobbing.

Nambikwara rites do not seem to be symbolic in any way. The skeleton-like state of A21 and a22 at the end of the period of abstinence testifies to that, and although ceremonies are rare, they are carried far. The informants speak of periods of three months for the isolation of the young girl entering puberty, and of a bath in the river lasting a whole night as a preliminary to marriage. However much behavior is supple and without complication in daily life, likewise intrusions of the supernatural (in visions and revelations, the séances of shamanism, war dances, etc.) are manifested by the transition to an atmosphere of tragedy. No South American group, to our knowledge, expresses in such a sincere and spontaneous way (for one never feels the theatrical atmosphere of Tupi or chaqueño shamanism) such violent and opposed sentiments, whose individual expression seems inseparable from a social stylization which never betrays them.

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It is far from us to wish to assign an exclusively economic cause to this dualism. Nevertheless, it is astonishing to consider that the psychological dualism goes on an equal footing with the organization of social existence around [127] two opposite poles, ...: the one hand the sedentary life, agricultural, based on the dual masculine activity of the construction of huts and of gardening; on the other hand, the nomadic period, during which subsistence is principally assured by feminine collecting and gathering, the one representing alimentary security and well-being, the other chance and want. To these two ways of life, one followed in the winter, the other in the summer, the Nambikwara react in very different ways. They speak of the former with the melancholy which is attached to the conscious and resigned acceptance of the human condition, to the dull repetition of identical acts.